● 764 At the village of Tik-ke-Tik in Yaelima territory, we witnessed a similar scene following the death of a young man.

At nightfall his body was wrapped in mats or rattan splints, solidly plaited, tied up, and completely sealed. At dawn the [462] mortuary bundle, attached to a strong branch, was lifted by two men. Instead of taking the village lane, they carried the corpse behind the hut and then through the bush. A few men walking Indian file made up the procession, at the end of which was the

[142 291 301 516]

Fig. 12. Mother and Child, Bankutshu Tribe.

mother of the deceased in mourning costume. The path they followed was quite irregular. Largely avoiding the trodden paths, the bearers often retraced their steps and took almost two hours to reach the cemetery, four kilometers from the village.

764 764 On the way back, the natives explained to me that the numerous turns and the walk through untrodden bush were meant to lead astray the evil spirit who had entered the village and killed the

M 764 761

young man! [Ed., the text is not translated from mid-page 17 to the second paragraph, page 19.]

[19] Since the chief goal of our expedition was to study the practices and customs connected with the material and everyday life of the native, as well as to gather objects for our collection, our stay among the various tribes was too

M 121

M [732]

Fig. 14. Natural Deformations among the Natives. (1) Bankutu woman; (2) Barakata woman; (3) Bankutu child.

short to permit a thorough study of their religious life and its attendant customs.

M I 776

We ascertained that the native, as a rule, acknowledges the existence of a higher spirit. During my stay in the village of Kapanda, Banfumungu tribe, I had the opportunity to question a chief on the subject.

"Who causes the sun and the moon to rise? Who gave you the fish of the river and the animals of the plain, Matali?"

The chief looked at me for an instant, dumbfounded, and then replied, "Nzambi ve Mundele?" "Was it not Nzambi, White man?"

"Why, then, do you not call upon Nzambi to protect your crops, favor your fishing, and grant you success in hunting, Matali?" [20]

FO32 Mongo FO32
Take F133
Sakata F043

to burial, the deceased is laid out in the mortuary hut. Relatives, friends, and acquaintances sit up with the body in turn. Night and day, plaintive and monotonous chants commemorate the high deeds of the deceased, his glory, his qualities, his wealth, his power, his whole life. The burial is carried out with great pomp and ends with a general consumption of the whole supply of palm wine, malafu, and masanga [Ed., sugar-cane beer].

Fig. 16. Ebandia, Chief of the Mosengere, Two Favorite Wives, and Principal Dignitaries.

The peoples of Lake Leopold II place the corpse in a wooden coffin. Those of the Lukenie region wrap it in mats. Both groups bury the deceased the day after death.

The cemeteries are located outside the village. The relatives lay out a few broken utensils on the grave. If the deceased was a hunter of repute, they plant a long staff upon the grave, and the skull of some animal killed by the dead man is attached at the top of it. [27]

During my stay in the territory of the Baboma-Banfumu of Bokala, I was struck by the presence of a tiny hut in the center of Chief Pokei's village. It was about 60 centimeters high, 30 centimeters wide, and 50 centimeters long. I thought at first

Article II. Property

593 614 Through marriage, a woman does not become a member of her husband's clan. If for example she is born into the Bofétola clan, she remains all her life bosí Bofétola, "member of the Bofétola [764] clan," and her corpse has to be buried in her native soil. In case of divorce and remarriage, the new husband does not refund the bride price to the former one; he pays the woman's parents, and they reimburse the forsaken husband.

593 421 All the wife's activity, however, is directed toward the good of her husband and his family, and this is so from the time of the ikulá payment. Her parents have no further rights over their daughter. All the fruits of her labor are her husband's property.

If she finds objects that have no owner, such as, for example, elephant tusks or buried copper rings of which no one claims ownership, they do not belong to her nor to her family, but exclusively to her husband. If he shares with his parents-in-law, he does so out of affection and respect for them. He has no legal obligation to do so, but propriety and cordial relations impose a certain duty on him.

Profits from the sale of the products of her industry (such as foods for market, mats, salt, pots, baskets) belong not to her but to her husband.

Even whatever she acquires during a visit to her parents, everything she finds while she is with her family, the fish she catches, the caterpillars she gathers in the forest there, all that belong exclusively to her husband.

It sometimes happens that a woman infringes on the husband's rights in this respect. If he is kind he will generally let her do as she [577] pleases. Severity on his part would be attributed to a lack of affection toward his wife or a lack of delicacy toward his parents-in-law, and he would even be criticized for being stingy (never unjust!), a more serious criticism than the others from the Nkundó point of view. [263] Dishonest conduct on the part of a wife, however, may give rise to incidents, and even to serious ones. That is what happened in the historic case of Efoloko of Ikengya (Bongí li), who was married to [578] Mpokú of Imomo. She had gone fishing at home and had given all her fish

593* 574 ɔtswâkâ liâla otswâk'olâ, bâfɔkolaka mbɔ́k'ɛ́y'olâ la ngɔm'a nkolé, "If you are married go back to your parents, or you will be taught the way with drums and gongs," that is, "when you are dead." (2)

●[164] [604] [534] 2. A woman is buried in her own native clan. Her corpse is transported there to the accompaniment of drums and horns. The lokolé gong announces her death.

593* 602 A married woman may not evade the duty of helping her relatives under special circumstances (pregnancy, illness, serious accidents, death). This obligation [285] is not limited to her mother and father, but extends to all her relatives; the closer the degree of kinship, the stricter the obligation.

Besides, love of family is sufficiently developed so that there is no danger of the woman forgetting herself too much in this realm. [626] And a husband who would like to prevent her from fulfilling these elementary duties would be much criticized by all and should expect a dissolution of the marriage.

593* 574 342 536 It was said above that a husband builds a hut for his wife. His relatives often assist him in this task. But it also happened -- in the past, for colonization has removed the possibility of it -- that the woman's father wanted to build his daughter's house himself or at least to make the pavement out of clay brought from her native land. This act was a demonstration of wealth and politico-social importance as well as proof of fatherly affection. The husband, for his part, was honored to have married the daughter of such an important man and loved her all the more. Thus a number of women say that "they only cooked on ancestral soil." This soil was brought in baskets across distances up to 50 kilometers by Batswa and by men of the woman's clan or village. Her father could do it because of his great influence and regal rewards (bokɔ̄ndɔ, verb kɔ̄nda) were distributed during a feast (ntɛkɛ) given for the workers and their relatives after the task was completed. This was done for Bɔmpɛli, daughter of Bɔkombɛ of Litili (Bombwanja) married to Bɔnyɛmɛ w'enyuka of the Basɛ́kâ Mbangɔ (Bonkoso); for Beluka, daughter of

152 761 593x free of all egoism. When even among peoples universally recognized as superior, self-pity during the pain felt on the death of someone beloved is neither rare nor reprehensible, can we be shocked that our natives experience similar regrets? Do we condemn a young widow who, although sincerely and intensely regretting the husband she loved tenderly and whom death has just removed from her affection, thinks at the same time of the unhappy situation in which she and her small children find themselves as a result? And is not the reasonable hope of finding someone who will take care of her and the orphans an effective and legitimate consolation that will help her to endure the trial?

All things considered, it is therefore not at all surprising that our Blacks react that way. And it is quite natural that, in practice, they should suffer more from the death of a father and especially a mother or a child than from the loss of a husband or wife. The situation here is entirely different from that in Europe. And the system of polygamy, with all its consequences, is not exactly discouraging to egoism and favorable to an ascension toward the ideal of a more sublime love.

Therefore we should not be surprised that a wife at the death of her husband laments: ngóy'ǒm'ǒkǎm óye! ("Mother, my husband, ah!"); but at the death of a child or a mother or father she wails: ngóya njólélengana óye! ("Mother, I am bereft, ah!"), thus expressing a more intense sorrow. For a father or a mother cannot be replaced, but she will always find someone who will want to marry her. As to a child, between it and its parents there is more of a life in common [419] than between spouses under the system of polygamy. More marks of tenderness are also exchanged between mother and child than between native couples.

●764 152 593x Immediately after his wife's death, a husband is surrounded by all the women of the village who come and mistreat him. They vie with each other in smearing him with charcoal smut, soil, and mud, and in rubbing him with the plant called linsánsá, which causes a stinging rash comparable to that caused by nettles in Europe. There are no relatives among the women who engage in this

152 rough behavior, only strangers married to village men (those known
593 as bâajâála). This ill treatment is often extended to close rela-
764 tives of the widower, that is, to those whom the women in ques-
tion call bâome, "potential husbands," never to fathers and higher
relatives. (1) The purpose of this practice seems to be to intensify,

1. See Chapter V, Article IV, 1, no. 3, and Chapter VI, Article VI.

by physical pain, the sorrow caused by death. In addition, provocatively obscene words, gestures, and movements remind the widower that from then on he must be continent, as described in extenso in the study cited above.

765 Afterwards, relatives dress the widower in a lisâki, a banana leaf which is torn all over horizontally. For all other mourning garments, as well as for all regulations and prohibitions that apply to all cases, see the detailed study.

The ill treatment described is not inflicted on the widow. It is meted out exclusively to men.

The general rules pertaining to seclusion apply to a widower; in fact they are especially severe for a man. His kinswomen prepare his simple meals. However, if his relations with his father-
[587] in-law were excellent, the latter sends a woman [420] to him who will attend to his needs. She often becomes his wife when, after the lifting of mourning, he brings the ibôleóko (Chapter III, Article IV).

During the entire first period of seclusion, he cannot go anywhere, at least ostensibly. If he needs to go out, he must go through the back. If he wants to visit a relative or friend, he must go behind the huts, in the banana grove, even if it is evening. In any case, he may not leave the village. Such was the ancient law, though nowadays it is observed less and less.

Furthermore, he cannot have the slightest contact with any woman who is not a relative. He cannot even shake her hand, greet her out loud, or look at her even in passing.

765 On that occasion the head of the family hands over to the first born of the deceased the bosólɔ́ to which he is entitled. As described in Chapter III, Article III, he thus receives one of the widows as his wife. She immediately leaves the group of widows; from then on she is no longer bound by any mourning obligation and goes to live with her new husband. If she loved the deceased very much, however, she asks the heir to leave her alone for a time; and her wishes are always respected.

The seclusion ends in a great feast that closes the period of mourning. It is during this feast that the inheritance, of which the widows also form a part, is divided. We will deal with it in Article V. [424]

Article III. The Burial

764 The husband's burial involves no ceremony or special rules differing in any way from those for any other person. However, his kinswomen must "buy the tomb," that is, they must pay a few rings to the women married into the family to obtain permission for the interment. This payment should be compared with those made to obtain dispensations from alimentary prohibitions.

The people buried simultaneously and in the same grave as the body of an influential man are never his widows, but solely his slaves. (1)

1. See Coutumes funeraires (Funeral Customs), Vol. 5, no. 2.

A Nkundɔ́ must be buried in the land of his ancestors in the clan cemetery. Since these people operate under a system of exogamy, the corpse of a married woman is naturally transported to the village of her birth in order to be buried there.

Before it is transported the corpse receives the usual care with the accompanying sacrifices. It must be kept in the husband's house for at least one night. And this custom is still observed at present. In the past the corpse remained there for days on end,

764 for it was necessary first to celebrate the farewell feast, and the widower's family had to gather to discuss the matter and collect the valuables needed for the funeral payment (see the article which follows). Only after all that did the young men belonging to the [482] husband's family take the mortal remains upon their shoulders -- wrapped in a mat or enclosed in a coffin, depending on the case.

If possible all the husband's relatives take part in the procession. The pallbearers walk at the head. The men are armed with bows and arrows, knives and sticks, seldom with spears. The women accompany them [425], wailing. The husband and, if necessary, a few relatives carry with them the various objects they will need for the payments. Some men have a lotótsi (an [534] ocarina) (1) or an antelope horn on which they play intermittently. (2)

1. See my "Note sur les Instruments de Musique à l'Equateur (Note on Musical Instruments at the Equator)" in Congo, 1935, Vol. 2, July, p. 187, figs. 1 and 2 (p. 199).

2. Sometimes there is also an accompaniment of drums.

[201] At the time the corpse is lifted and while passing through villages between their own and their destination, the lokolé is struck with regular and equal blows (-kémya) to announce the arrival of the funeral procession.

584 764 The chief personage among those who follow the corpse is not the husband, but the ndonga. He may never be absent at that time. Even if the husband is deceased and the procession is that of a widow who has not remarried, the ndonga must always be in the party. The duty of bringing the corpse of a married woman is above all his.

The ndonga may go ahead of the procession to inform the family of the deceased of her death, and if there is a great distance between the wife's village and the husband's, he may not be able

764 [584] to return to join the procession, or may be able to do so only with difficulty.

The act of carrying a corpse to its native clan is not designated by any specific term. The expression is simply tsíka ilíáka, "to go and return the corpse."

764 431 In one or more places near the entrance to the village, a barrier (bokáko, lokombí, or loílaka) made of posts and palms is set up. There the relatives of the deceased, armed, wait for the procession of the husband's relatives, who are also armed, and forbid them to continue their march. Before passing, the latter must make a payment. The valuables given are called by'ɛ̌kɔ by'ɔ̌káko or simply bokáko (or loílaka). The family of the deceased calls to the procession, "Halt! You will not pass here." The latter reply, "We come to bring [426] you the corpse of your child; we want to break down the barrier. Let us pass; here are [584] the gifts." The ndonga hands over a knife, a brass or copper ring, or some equivalent object (for instance, money, nowadays). Thereupon the members of the deceased's clan move away. The bɛ̌nambɔ́tswá (persons related to both clans) break down the barrier, and the procession passes, headed by the ndonga and the bɛ̌nambɔ́tswá. The husband follows the coffin.

764 519 In the past it was almost always necessary to force a passage through the barrier. The wife's family did not want to open and the husband's family did not want to pay, and so they came to blows. The group bearing the corpse tried to break down the barrier, while their adversaries tried to prevent them from doing so. The arms used in that struggle were chiefly pointed sticks which the members of the two camps threw at each other; more rarely, arrows were used. The specific name for this sort of brawl is ekɔ̀ɔ́lá. Certain clans specialize in this sport. Thus between Bofimbo and Lileko, there is a regular battle every time. In such serious cases the barrier is heavily fortified; the posts are thick and hard, and intertwined with thorny creepers (bokau, longolí, wanganjíla, etc.) and thorny shrubs (wɛ̌ngé, etc.). A quantity [825] of venomous biting ants (bafumba, mbómbá, byɛ̌mbo, etc.) are added. If the brawl becomes serious, the ndonga and the other bɛ̌nambɔ́tswa intervene and impose peace by requiring the husband's clan to pay.

764
579 Nevertheless, it may happen that the husband's family, while unable to vanquish their adversaries, persist in spite of everything in their desire not to pay. They run away and return home, abandoning the corpse in the hands of the family of the deceased. But this is a very serious offense. It is therefore considered simply as a breaking of the alliance between the two families. The husband need not bring funeral payments, for they will be refused in any case. Henceforth he can no longer [427] present a bride price to obtain a substitute for the deceased. Furthermore, he loses his rights over his children, whose maternal clan he has disowned, and if the matter is not settled in one way or another, he no longer has the right to the bride prices that will be paid for his daughters. And to add to his troubles, he risks being molested by the spirit of the deceased.

When the husband's party succeeds in opening a passage, the opposing clan hastens to defend the succeeding barrier. In fact, if the procession must pass through several clans or groups related to the wife (her mother's clan, grandfather's clan, grandmother's clan, etc.), each group sets up its own barrier.

If there are no more barriers, the struggle is ended. But in any case the husband must pay the valuables demanded for passing through. When the procession arrives at the village, the question of funeral payments is settled, and these "tolls" are included in the accounting.

In the past a brawl was usually inevitable. And even now they occur more frequently than we would suspect. But the violence has been reduced to a few light wounds. Some clans arrange the matter amicably without resorting to action. But only very seldom do they neglect to put up a barrier. Nevertheless, cases do occur here and there under the pressure of chiefs who favor the penetration of European notions of public peace and tranquility. In these instances the parties involved merely pay regular indemnities at the time of the palaver concerning funeral payments. A great friendship between the two clans involved sometimes favors this more humane type of behavior.

764 519 152 [514] When the family of the deceased bars the route to the funeral procession, they are manifesting the anger provoked by the death of one of their members. [428] For they feel anger and resentment, in spite of the fact that the ndonga carries a spear at the head of the procession as a sign that they come as friends, without evil intentions.

This does not mean that the natives attribute the cause of death to the husband and his family. In most cases they are convinced that the latter could not prevent it. Although they express themselves in those terms: lídéoomela lɛ́ɛ́na (nkéna, eéso), "you have killed our child (sister, relative)," they do not maintain that the husband's clan has really killed her, but only that she died among them. Under the circumstances do they feign anger to obtain valuables, for example? I do not think so. The Nkundó do not say that they simulate anger; they categorically state that they feel it and that they want to show it in the manner described. We should not be astonished at this since -- as we have noted in the study on the funeral customs of the Nkundó (Les Coutumes funéraires des Nkundó), the emotions of anger and sorrow seem to be intimately related among these peoples.

764 When the funeral procession passes through the last barrier, that which bars the entrance to the village, the husband's clan puts down the body, and it is subsequently lifted up by the family of the deceased, who carry it into the house of the head of the family. They are followed by the ndonga, the bɔ́ɔmbɔ́ɔtswɛ́, the husband, and his relatives. The family of the deceased wail over her. Her kinswomen (bɔ́ɔnanyi) show their sorrow-anger by mistreating the clan wives (bɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́la), by smearing their bodies with mud, dressing them in bɔ́ɔ́ki, and hitting them with stinging plants (bɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́). For the deceased is the bɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́la's "husband," that is, a kinswoman of their husbands. The bɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́la treat the widower and his relatives in the same way, because "their husband" has died among them.

The corpse is thus deposited in the hut of the head of the family. Each time that kinswomen who are married elsewhere arrive [428] to mourn over the deceased, the bɔ́ɔ́ɔ́ɔ́la forbid them

764 to enter the funeral hut. First they are required to go to the far end of the village, weeping for the deceased, to show their sorrow.

As I have said in the study cited, it often happens that after some time the lamentations slacken and the women keeping watch begin to chat. One day I was present during a quarrel on [578] this subject between the bɔ́ɔnanyí and the baá ɓáála. The former were reproaching the latter for not weeping any longer: "After all it is your husband," they said. The others replied, "It is your kinswoman; therefore it is up to you to weep. Are your eyes so dry that they no longer contain tears?"

Sometimes the husband and his close relatives do not participate in transferring the body, because they have not yet succeeded in collecting the necessary valuables. Actually it is entirely legitimate for them to stay at home in such a case, in order not to be exposed to endless discussions and the ridicule of the entire region. In other instances the husband's family belongs only to a small clan, and therefore they do not dare to appear in the village of the deceased. They are afraid that they will not be able to defend themselves properly against the ill treatment that would be inflicted upon them by the women married into the clan to which they go. For in fact these women would mistreat them by throwing mud at them or smearing them with it, and by striking their bodies with stinging plants called bandandá. For they consider that the widower, whom, by extension, they also call their husband, and his close relatives have killed their husbands' kinswoman.

In such cases the corpse is brought by distant relatives of the husband. The mɔ́ɔnga apologizes for the husband to the parents-in-law and tells them that he will come later to settle everything. The clan of the deceased receives the corpse and continues to perform the last tributes to it. If the husband has remained in his own village only out of fear of ill treatment, [430] he often waits only until nightfall and then takes advantage of the darkness to follow his wife's corpse.

The corpse must remain in the head of the family's house for at least one night.

●764 Before proceeding with the burial, the two families settle the question of funeral payments, which we are about to examine. A "farewell feast" is given by the clan of the deceased. The interment itself has no special features, so that it will suffice to refer the reader to the study of this subject that has been cited.

766 As we noted in Chapter VII, Article II, a husband can buy the corpse of his favorite. Unless the execution of this intention meets with some obstacle, the corpse is not transported to the favorite's native clan but is buried next to the husband's tomb in his clan cemetery. As a result, all that accompanies the transporting of the corpse is omitted, as is the funeral payment which is compensated for by the purchase of the corpse. The husband or his family only send the wife's relatives the payment that usually accompanies the news of her death.

Article IV. Funeral Payments

764 As we have just said, before the husband proceeds with the transportation of a deceased wife's corpse, he collects the valuables to pay the nkunjí. This is the term (derived from the verb kunda, "to bury") that designates the various payments a widower is required to make to the clan of the deceased.

First of all, as soon as the death is known, the ndonga goes to the parents of the deceased and brings them the nsango (news), which consists of a copper ring or a knife. He presents them with these, saying: "Know that your daughter so-and-so has just died."

At every barrier the procession must cross to reach the village of the deceased, the husband must make payment of some object [431] (usually a knife or a ring) in order to obtain free passage.
[584] The ndonga always serves as intermediary. These payments are called bokáko by'ókáko or simply bokáko, lokílaka (barrier), or, among the Bombwanja, ifaká yí ekílaki, "knife for felling (the barrier)."

The ndonga walks at the head of the funeral procession; he (or another bonambótswá who takes his place) carries a spear

● 764 to which a piece of raffia cloth is tied. When the procession has crossed the last barrier, the official witness goes ahead and plants the spear in the roof of the head of the family's hut. Hence the name applied specifically to this spear: itúwansambá (from túwa, "to pierce," and nsambá "roof"). The spear signifies that the widower's family is not coming with evil intentions, but that they are moved by feelings of the greatest friendship -- wéŋka te tóíóyé l'etumba; toóyá ndé óloosíhela ilákí y'ɔ́na.

The piece of cloth is a sign of respect for the mother of the deceased, in memory of the pain she suffered in giving birth to her daughter and the care she exercised in her upbringing, and as consolation for the terrible blow that has come to her in the death of her child. She will wear this cloth after the end of mourning. If the mother has died before her daughter, this cloth goes to one of the mother's sisters, aunts, or other relatives, who is in some sense her substitute. It is therefore a payment to the mother's clan.

The spear and the cloth are usually designated by the common name lilongá l'etóo, "spear and cloth." A knife, particularly an ingóndá, can be substituted for the cloth, but the name etóo is retained. Nowadays the cloth is no longer given, but a knife which is given the name etóo is always substituted for it. (1) Nevertheless,

[286]

1. The reason for this substitution is, first of all, the greater value of the knife and, second, the near impossibility of obtaining raffia cloth (see Introduction).

in memory of [432] the ancient custom, a piece of European cloth is often attached to the end of the spear.

When the corpse has been deposited in the head of the family's hut, the two clans greet each other in the usual fashion. The women continue to weep for some time. The husband's clan go and sit at a little distance. Then the relatives of the deceased instruct their wives to collect the presents to give the widower.

[262] [431]

These consist of various foods: manioc, bananas, smoked meat or fish, caterpillars, salt, hens, etc., one or several dogs (bompángá) that are alive (mbwá ɛ̂ɛ̂ nkunja, "dog with hair") or their value in specie (2 rings or 1 ring and an equivalent knife, which for this purpose is called mbwá ɛ̂ɛ̂ baámbá or ɛ̂ɛ̂ bakonga), as well as a knife for killing and cutting up animals called loólola. The bíónanyi and the baá ɲɲóla each brings his part. Note that this gift never includes vegetables (bimukélá).

When everything is collected and considered adequate, the ndonga is called, together with the deceased's own sons, so that they can thus give their opinion and later have a good basis for testimony. As remuneration for his services, the ndonga receives a payment (nyongo) of a bokósa fish or a botómba rat, as well as a bunch of bananas (for which a ring is sometimes substituted). With reference to this subject I should like to recount an interesting part of the negotiations at which I was present one day. The ndonga expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that he was given only a single bokósa. "It is so little," he said, "in comparison with all the trouble I had to take. I had to settle the matter of the bride price; I had to reconcile man and wife when they quarreled; I had to intervene many times; I always had to run between the two clans; for many years I wore myself out without ever having any rest. And for all that trouble I get such small recompense." I was asked my opinion. I could only express approval of the ndonga's view. One of the relatives [433] of the deceased also considered him to be right: "He was always obliged to come and go between the two families; his voice has become hoarse from his endless interventions in palavers and quarrels; he well deserves that another bokósa be added." Everyone sided with our opinion, and the ndonga was satisfied.

After receiving his present, the ndonga detaches himself from the group. Together with the other banambótswá and any intelligent strangers who may be present and might be able to give an opinion to settle an incidental argument, he sits down between the two opposing clans, a slight distance from each.

764 584 All the payments must pass through the ndonga. He is the one who transmits the desired objects from one group to the other. He intervenes in the disputes that arise in order to settle them and re-establish peace. He explains the various points of view, elucidates some consideration whose significance the other group does not seem to fully comprehend, etc.

As has already been said many times, there can be several ndonga. Legally all of them can intervene personally or through their officially recognized representatives. Thus, several months ago (1933) at Bonjoku, Badembe, wife of Ikomo of Besombó, was present at a nkunjí discussion. No one paid any attention to her. At one point she threw herself into the discussion by reprimanding the chief ndonga and the families involved, asking them on what basis they were excluding her from this affair. Did not her husband have the right to intervene? Was he not also a ndonga? Since he had gone fishing in the Jwalé, it was impossible for him to come. She could therefore legitimately substitute for him. Then why was [574] she being left out? She was quickly pacified, and the persons involved admitted that she was right and apologized for their forgetfulness and negligence.

764 584 431 The wives of the deceased's clan place the gifts of food at the ndonga's feet. The bokóné (the youngest) of the clan goes and explains to him what they are and for whom [434] the gifts are intended. (1) One portion goes to the bakalé of the deceased, that

1. In the Nkundó hierarchy it is always the youngest who is charged with the execution of all such small tasks, at the behest of the head of the family.

is, the bafálla of the husband's clan; another portion goes to the bedeme (the husbands), that is, to the widower and his family; a third part is set aside for kinswomen of the deceased who have come from villages into which they are married in order to be present at the funeral.

764 The clan of the deceased first asks the other clan "for news" (fóla mango). The latter reply that one of their members had

764 married the daughter of the first clan, and she had lived happily with her husband, performed conjugal services for him, and had begotten children for him. Subsequently she fell ill, as they were informed at the time, and now God has taken her away and they have come to bring the corpse back to them. The wife's clan replies: "That is understood, but before we continue to ask each other for news, do accept the present (lionja) which we offer you." Thereupon the ndonga enumerates all that has been collected and passes it to the widower.

764 491 The foods thus given are a friendly welcoming gift, therefore they are not counted as a payment nor, furthermore, as part of the nkomf. Only the domestic animals are considered such. They can be eaten on the spot or kept alive. Since the prepared food is a present, it must be eaten on the spot. Theoretically, none of it may be taken home. If it is taken home for some reason or other, however, it is still forbidden to allow anyone to eat of it who was not present at the funeral gathering. As for the raw food, the recipients are free to carry it away if some is left over.

764 578 Disputes may arise on the subject of the dog -- such as one I witnessed one day. The presents offered included the equivalent of the value of a dog in rings rather than a living dog. [435] The head of the widower's family demanded a dog in flesh and blood. The reason he gave was that many of his bilinanyf had come to the funeral and, as an expression of his thanks for their condolences, he wanted to give them a dog. As he would not yield, the wife's family had to replace the two rings with the animal demanded.

Then the ndonga explains to the family of the deceased that he has already brought the nsango, the likungi, and the etsh. Nowadays it happens that the spear and the cloth are not given until this time, especially if the families refrain from erecting barriers and fighting. In such cases the payments of passage are made at the same time. If the two settlements are very near each other, the people are even beginning to omit the sending of the nsango; a bʃambilowá goes and confirms the news of the death, which is already expected and which the lokoli will just have announced.

• 764 Then the members of the wife's family, one by one, demand various payments. Every request arouses discussion, for it is fashionable to prolong these palavers. One side and then the other examines the pros and cons. The widower's family acts as if they needed a little urging, for if they did not, the ceremony would no longer resemble a palaver (which it really is) but would seem like a simple payment of no importance.

When the wife's family has enumerated the presents of food that have been offered and accepted and the payments that have already been made, they begin to ask that the other nkunjí valuables be brought. The widower's clan explain their point of view, and a member of the wife's clan immediately begins to beat the gong (lokolé), which is nearby. It is no longer possible to understand a word of what the husband's spokesman is saying. Full of fortitude and an African's patience, the latter continues his discourse. But finally he realizes that he has to stop. He therefore asks that the lokolé be silenced. Naturally, he has no success. The wife's clan dryly replies: "If you want us to stop, bring us a ring." [436] Thus the husband is forced to pay, and when he does the noise of the lokolé stops at once, and the discussion can continue. For this reason that first payment is called lokolé. (1)

1. The pressure exercised to obtain it is called isesenganya yá lokolé. It should be compared with the identical practice at the time of the payment of the bride price (Chapter II, Article V, 3).

Then a young and vigorous relative of the deceased leaves his group. He acts angry, strikes his hands, and defies the widower's clan: "Send one of your men to fight me, for I am furious that you have allowed my kinswoman to die of starvation." He is answered with many protestations: "We are friends; we have no hostile feelings. It is not our fault that our wife is dead." The first speaker repeats his statement and his challenge, and continues to reproach them with the death until he is given a ring called bonkíta, meaning "starvation."

• 764 Another young member of the clan of the deceased seats himself midway between the two groups. An etáka (a wooden fork) is placed on his neck, and he says: "This is how you would have treated me if my sister had left you. I ran the risk of having to suffer because of her and you. Compensate me for that." And he does not go away until he has received a ring, which for that reason is called etáka. (2)

2. This representation only approximates reality, for the young man would not have been treated thus. The wife herself is the one who would be placed under the etáka. But the young man represents the entire clan as a whole.

Subsequently, various payments each consisting of a ring or a knife are demanded with many imitative and symbolic gestures (in the manner described for the two above). They are:

ikɛmɛ (benáŋga l'ikɛmɛ), because of the potions that the deceased prepared for her husband.

bantsingí -- the packages of food that she cooked in ashes for him. [437]

baɔnda -- the pieces of palm nut she prepared for him. (These pieces are represented by a few little lumps of earth placed on leaves.)

nɛŋgi -- the eyelashes she plucked out for him.

bokɛngɔ -- because she cut his hair (-kɛnga).

ntili -- the lice she removed from his head. (Note that this payment can be combined with the preceding one and can then consist of a single konga for both.)

bompilo -- the hot baths she heated for him.

mouka -- baskets of fish, because she went fishing for him.

bɛdɛŋɔ́ -- the litter on which the corpse was transported.

bekɔmbɛ -- the creepers with which the corpse was tied.

betówa (itówí) -- the banana tree trunks on which the corpse rested. (The corpse, in a mat or coffin, is set on two banana tree trunks placed crosswise.)

bikofo -- the heavy branches upon which lay the bed in which the woman died.

lɔ̌ngo -- a hoe (real or replaced by a ring) to dig the grave.

ifakí -- a knife (ditto) to dig the grave.

yɛ́ndí -- an axe (ditto) to cut the roots that would be found at the site of the grave. (1)

1, One day I saw the iron bar given as yɛ́ndí refused by the wife's family because it was the same one they themselves had given to help the husband pay the nkanga (doctor-sorcerer) for his divination (bolíngó) during the wife's illness.

[787]

bombɛ́mbé wɛ́ nyang'dy'ɔ́na -- a belt for the mother of the deceased, so that she can wear it during mourning.

bɔ́sí w'ɔ́lílkí -- the head of the corpse, in honor of those who wail over the deceased while sitting near her head, that is, [438] to say, the very close relatives. This is the last and largest payment, consisting of 3 to 5 rings.

All these payments together comprise the nkunjí and, with the exception of the nsango, the likongí l'etɔ́o, and the by'ɔ́ko by'ɔ́kko, they are a kind of bɛ́ngo. (1) Not all the bɛ́ngo are

1. See Chapter II, Article V.

equally large. Therefore, all of them are not always claimed. The smallest ones -- bakémo, bantsingí, bɛ́ndo, nkɔ́ngí, bokɔ́mɔ, mili, bompílo, mpuka -- are often omitted.

Even some of the others may be left out. The matter depends not only on the friendliness of feeling between the two groups, but chiefly on the number of children to which the woman in question has given birth. If the woman was sterile, her family is less demanding. But if the deceased had several children, they do not yield, arguing that their daughter was a source of great profit to her husband's clan.

In every case at least a few bɛ́ngo in addition to the bombémbé and the bɔsɔ́ w'ílakí are always claimed. The latter payments can never be omitted. The belt is a payment made exclusively to the mother and by rights it goes to the mother's clan.

The higher the amount of these funeral payments, the more the son-in-law is welcome. The alliance is perfect. Therefore, not only will the wife's family reciprocate his fine feelings by adding a few more dogs, but in addition the son-in-law will be well received and successful in his application when, after the period of mourning, he brings the sum of the ibɔ́lɛ́ɔko in order to obtain a substitute for the deceased. (2) In addition, if the relations with

2. See Chapter III, Article IV.

his in-laws have been excellent, he will easily obtain the substitute in advance, so that she can care for him during the entire mourning period.

There are severe sanctions against the omission of the funeral payments. [439] Neglecting to send the notification gift alone is enough to set these in motion. They are: the breaking off of the affinal relationship; the loss of the children, since the father's offense is equal to a repudiation; and finally molestation of the culprit by the spirit of the deceased. Thus at Bokɔtola (Bompela) one can find two boys, Bɔnɔ́tsí and Ikembá, the children of Bonyongela of Ntángá and Etɔ́ka of Bokɔtola. They have now been incorporated into their mother's clan, because their father did not send a mango. On stronger grounds the same is true for the whole nkumí.

Article V. The Social Position of a Widow

In Chapter III, Articles II and IV, we have already noted that in the eyes of the Nkundó, the death of the husband does not dissolve a marriage. The union continues, and even after mourning it is not broken ipso facto. Even to have the woman taken and treated as a wife by another man is not enough to end it. As

Everywhere there were also abducted women and female slaves; these were simply sold. Furthermore women were bought and sold with women [as payment]. Also women who were inherited and no longer in the hands of their family were sold by their second, third, or other subsequent husband. In all of these cases, the family no longer came into consideration for the bride price. One would have to stretch the point in order to consider the sums paid in these cases as a bride price, and consequently as a native custom which one must respect.

Or one should have to assume that such a native woman remains a "bride" for her whole lifetime. It will be said that the woman consented to her sale by one man to the other.

Often this was indeed the case, but not always by any means, for children and slaves were also sold. Even the consent of the woman did not prevent it from being a sale; her consent was rather an extra transaction that simplified the sale of a human article of trade. It still remains woman trade.

The Inheritance. Upon the death of a polygynist, the burial ceremony was conducted according to the class and rank of the deceased. One or two or several [539] slaves were killed and buried with the polygynist in the same grave. Sometimes the arms and legs of those male and female slaves were broken, and then they were buried alive in the same grave with the body.

When these slaves still had family, it might happen that the family members, having learned of the unfortunate lot of their relative, would hasten from faraway districts to buy him or her free if it was not yet too late. Several Negroes have told us of those heartbreaking scenes at which they were present as children. The mourning and the lamenting over the dead lasted from a week to a month.

The eldest son immediately succeeded his father in position and immediately took one of the wives of his father.

The other sons divided among them the lances and knives of their father.

If the deceased had left no son, or if he was still too young, the oldest brother succeeded the deceased. All of the wives had to remain in their own home, except the wife who was immediately taken by the eldest son. They were obliged to await the day of the distribution. This day was put off for from one to four months.

latter group. Another factor which reminds us of the wife's continuing membership in her original group is the connection, never completely severed, between the groups related by marriage, illustrated by the practice of gifts and counter-gifts which are all part of the bride price and the dowry. When she dies, the wife is buried in the soil of her group. In addition, the group membership of the wife is transferred to the children, although this does not have the same effects in economic and political terms. Matrilineal descent is important in relation to marriage restrictions, certain avoidance practices which are passed on through the wives, and also certain privileges. Quite a large number of persons has settled permanently in the group of their mother or that of their grandmothers.

The decisive factor that makes the term "large family" unsuitable is the "eternal" character of the A-E groups of the Ekonda. However, the subdivisions of the A-groups which live together in a common homestead (see p. 10) may be regarded as large families in the sense used by Thurnwald, Kirchhoff, and Murdock.

Kinship Group

In the definitions of the term "family" quoted above, we already learned something about Thurnwald's concept of a kinship group, but there is an additional reference to the technical term "kinship group" ["Sippe"]" (p. 17 f.) (24):

24. Menschliche Gesellschaft, Vol. 4.

"...A kinship group is defined as a clan (q.v.) which is not politically independent. Usually the loss of independence is caused by the distribution of the people of the clan among the various settlements. A kinship group is held together by the consciousness of being descended from the same ancestors and by their common cult of the ancestors. The kinship group is of special importance for the regulation of marriage (q.v.). -- A kinship group may be divided into kinship subgroups (large